



UNITED STATES SENATOR ★ SERVING THE CITIZENS OF IDAHO

LARRY CRAIG

NEWS RELEASE

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COMMITTEE REVIEWS HEALTHY FORESTS BILL

Craig disappointed in progress to date

WASHINGTON, D.C. – A United States Senate subcommittee held a hearing today on implementation of the Healthy Forest Restoration Act. The Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee’s Subcommittee on Public Lands and Forests, chaired by Idaho Senator Larry Craig, heard from Administration officials as well as a range of representatives from the public and other levels of government.

Craig, a proponent of the Act, held the hearing to gauge how the law is being implemented since it was signed into law in 2003.

Craig noted, “Initial progress is a disappointment to me, but I do recognize that the agencies accomplished 30 percent more thus far this year than they did last year. I applaud that effort. However, even if we accomplish 30 percent more each year, we won’t treat all of the 20 million acres hoped for in the Act until 2028.

“As fires rage across the dry West, there is an expectation that communities in the Wildland Urban Interface will be protected, and everyone who worked on this Act wants to provide the agencies with the tools to be successful. Today’s hearing demonstrated that we still have hurdles in front of us and collaboration continues to be a necessity for success.”

Craig opened the hearing paying tribute to Jeff Allen of Salmon, Idaho and Shane Heath of Melba, Idaho, who lost their lives fighting the Cramer Fire in 2003. The anniversary of the accident is this Saturday.

Craig said, “The tragic loss of these two men continues to be felt throughout their communities, and their selfless acts of true bravery will not be forgotten. I commend the men and women who risk their lives every day by undertaking this terribly dangerous job with courage and professionalism.”

Visit <http://energy.senate.gov> for more information on the hearing, including prepared statements from the witnesses.